ALASKA PENINSULA AND ALEUTIAN ISLANDS MANAGEMENT AREAS HERRING SAC ROE MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1993

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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide commercial herring fishermen and buyers with information and guidelines for participating in the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas herring sac roe fisheries.

The Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas (Figures 1-2) are described as Management Area "M" and are divided into three subareas: (1) the South Peninsula, consisting of Pacific Ocean coastal waters extending west of Kupreanof Point to 163°30' W.long. (the south side of Unimak Island near Cape Lazaref); (2) the Aleutian Islands, consisting of Bering Sea waters extending west of Unimak Pass and Pacific Ocean waters extending west of 163°30' W.long. (the south side of Unimak Island near Cape Lazaref) to the United States-Russian Convention Line of 1867; and (3) the North Peninsula, consisting of Bering Sea waters extending west from Cape Menshikof to Cape Sarichef (Figures 3-9).

The South Peninsula sac roe fishery has occurred annually since 1979 (except in 1983, the Alaska Board of Fisheries allocated the entire sac roe catch to the food and bait fishery), while the North Peninsula fishery has occurred annually since 1982 (Table 1; McCullough 1993). All fisheries continue to be open-to-entry. The sac roe fisheries target on individual herring stocks during their spawning period. The desired product during the sac roe fisheries is pre-spawn herring having a roe recovery of about 10%. The Aleutian Islands Area has had no sac roe deliveries. The South Peninsula sac roe fishery has averaged 267.4 tons (1988-92 average). The North Peninsula sac roe fishery has averaged 1,318.6 tons (1988-92 average). Both purse seine and set gill net gear have been used, but set gill net gear has not been used with much success.

The commercial fisheries are intended to occur with minimal waste of the resource and within conservation limits as determined by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). ADF&G does not manage the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas herring sac roe harvest to enhance the value of the landed product, because adequate information and staff is not available in-season (ADF&G 1992; 5 AAC 27.059). Herring quality will be determined by the permit holder and the buyer. Roe recovery will not be a criteria for emergency openings or closures except in cases where documented excessive wastage is expected to be a factor. Permit holders are encouraged to check with their markets prior to fishing to determine roe percentages which are acceptable to the industry. ADF&G will manage the fisheries per the statewide general herring guideline harvest policy which provides for harvests not to exceed 20% of the available spawning biomass (ADF&G 1992; 5 AAC 27.060).

Management units with guideline harvest levels (Table 2) are treated as areas with individual stocks and have a history of sac roe harvests. Management units lacking historic harvests and biomass estimates are open for exploration and may potentially

support sac roe fisheries, or are management units where fisheries occur outside of bays and lagoons and are not perceived to have habitat suitable for herring spawning. Due to the lack of data from exploratory areas, annual harvest levels may fluctuate considerably until more information about the stock status is obtained.

In-season emergency order closures for each area will occur as the guideline harvest levels for each unit are achieved. Closures may also result prior to attaining a guideline harvest level if the fishery performance or aerial surveys indicate that a stock biomass is less than anticipated. Harvests in excess of their guideline harvest level will occur if the assessed available spawning biomass warrants continued catches. Closures will also be used to ensure that excessive harvests are minimized in exploratory situations.

The North Peninsula sac roe guideline harvest level has been reduced to account for North Peninsula herring that are probably harvested during the Aleutian Islands (Dutch Harbor) food and bait fishery (Funk 1991). Non-Togiak herring stocks comprise about 22% of the Aleutian Islands herring catch; due to the July 16 opening date of the food and bait fishery, North Peninsula herring stocks probably comprise the majority of the non-Togiak herring component. The 1993 Aleutian Islands food and bait harvest allocation is 1,978 tons (K.A. Rowell, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage, personal communication). To insure that North Peninsula herring stocks are not harvested beyond a 20% exploitation rate for both the sac roe and food/bait fisheries combined, a sac roe exploitation rate of 16% of the spawning biomass will be the management goal.

In-season emergency orders will be broadcast on the single side band radio on 4125 and 3230 Khz and on the VHF radio on channel 6 and 70, or other channels if arrangements are made with the local representative of ADF&G. Current announcements will be available on the ADF&G record-a-phone at 383-2334.

Local offices of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game are:

Sand Point:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game P.O. Box 129
Sand Point, AK 99661
phone (907) 383-2066
fax (907) 383-2606
record (907) 383-2334
VHF 6
Single Side Band 3230

Cold Bay:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game P.O. Box 50 Cold Bay, AK 99571 phone (907) 532-2419 fax (907) 532-2470 VHF 6 Single Side Band 3230 and 4125

Port Moller:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game PO Box PML C/O Peter Pan Seafoods-Port Moller Port Moller, AK via: Cold Bay 99571-8999 phone (907) 987-2216 fax (907) 987-2215 VHF 70 Single Side Band 3230

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Registration Requirements

Tenders and Processors

Each tender operator and buyer-processor must register in person at an ADF&G office. In North Peninsula fisheries, registration of tenders and buyer-processors will occur onthe-grounds by the skipper/owner of the tender or buyer-processor only at Port Moller or Port Heiden. North Peninsula registration must occur prior to buying or tendering herring in North Peninsula waters (Appendix A). For South Peninsula and Aleutian Islands fisheries, registration of tenders and buyer-processors will be conducted by an ADF&G representative at Canoe Bay, Cold Bay, Sand Point, or Dutch Harbor; registration must occur prior to buying or tendering herring in South Peninsula and Aleutian Islands waters. Catch reporting instructions will be explained in detail during registration. If registering in person causes undue inconvenience, other arrangements may be possible, but ADF&G in Sand Point or Port Moller must be contacted.

Fishing Vessels

During the sac roe season there are no vessel registration requirements for fishing vessels. Fishermen must provide specific catch locations (statistical area or a specific landmark) to buyers, so that it can be recorded on fish tickets. If active gear levels become excessive and the herring become susceptible to a harvest potentially exceeding the guideline harvest level, the normal continuous open fishing periods in South Peninsula and Aleutian waters and the Amak District of the North Peninsula may be changed to hourly openings followed by a long enough closure to collect, summarize, and update all harvest data.

Fishing Periods

Fishing periods will be seven days per week and 24 hours per day in South Peninsula and Aleutian Islands waters and in the Amak District of the North Peninsula. In the Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts of the North Peninsula fishing periods will be announced by emergency order. A minimum of 6 hours notice will be given prior to the opening of any fishing period in the Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts, unless it is an extension of a fishing period in progress.

Catch Reporting

If monitoring of the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas sac roe fisheries becomes impossible due to late catch reporting procedures, stringent in-season

measures will be effected to insure that excessive harvests do not occur. Such measures may, but will not be limited to frequent closures to assess fish tickets information, followed by notice (usually 24 hour) of the next fishing period. Failure to adhere to the reporting requirements specified on the tender registration form will result in a citation. Timely and accurate catch information provided by the processors will be essential in managing the fisheries. Processors and tender operators will be required to provide daily tallies of herring harvested (report into ADF&G on a daily basis even if no herring were purchased) by area and must provide accurate estimates of herring onboard tenders that have not yet delivered to the processor. Individual codes will be provided for each tender or processor that will be involved in the fisheries for reporting harvests.

Fish Tickets

Fish tickets from herring fisheries must be delivered to a local ADF&G commercial fishery representative prior to transporting herring out of any subarea (North and South Peninsula or Aleutian Islands), and before completing operations and leaving Management Area M. If delivering fish tickets directly to ADF&G personnel causes undue inconvenience, other arrangements can be made through contacting ADF&G at either Port Moller or Sand Point. For information and catch reporting during the herring sac roe fisheries in the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak contact ADF&G in Dutch Harbor on Single Side Band 4125 or VHF 6 radios.

Gill Net And Seine Specifications (5 AAC 27.631 and 5 AAC 27.632 in part)

During the herring sac roe season, the aggregate length of herring gill nets in use by a herring CFEC permit holder may not exceed 150 fathoms.

During the herring sac roe season, no purse seine may be more than 1,000 meshes in depth and more than 100 fathoms in length.

Aircraft

There is no restriction on the use of aircraft.

Cooperation

Fishermen, tender operators, and processor cooperation will be appreciated when ADF&G personnel request herring samples from the commercial catch, or from juvenile or spawnout schools inadvertently seined. These samples will be used for monitoring age composition, which assists in determining the health of a stock and in forecasting next years run strength. ADF&G will also be monitoring and mapping spawning activities and

will be soliciting information on commercial herring sightings to supplement information gathered by ADF&G. Fishermen and spotter pilots are encouraged to provide biomass and spawning information to ADF&G; these reports will be treated confidentially. Past cooperation has been excellent and has proven valuable in evaluating stock status and in gaining management information.

North Peninsula

By emergency order (number 4-F-M-SP-01-93) the Amak District commercial sac roe herring fishery is from April 15 through June 30. Commercial herring fishing in the Amak District is continuous from the opening date of the district (April 15). The Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts may open for commercial herring fishing from April 15 to June 30 but only during periods established by subsequent emergency order(s). A minimum six hour advance notice will be given prior to any fishing period in the Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts unless it is an extension of a fishing period. All North Peninsula herring sac roe fisheries will close on June 30, if sac roe stocks are discovered during the July 1 through July 15 time period, appropriate locations can be opened to herring sac roe fishing by subsequent emergency order(s). ADF&G's ability to monitor herring fisheries becomes limited by mid-June, which may be a consideration in shortening fishing periods and seasons.

The season will close for each stock by emergency order as their respective guideline harvest levels are achieved, or when fishery performance and stock performance indicate that deviations from the guideline harvest levels are warranted (where actual harvests occur at levels greater or lesser than expected), or by July 1. Stocks which are considered under-exploited will remain open for adequate exploitation to occur or until July 1, the current emergency order closure date. During the sac roe season, stocks which have been closed to harvesting may be reopened if it is determined by ADF&G that more fish in spawning condition have moved into the area, increasing the available spawning biomass to the point that the initial exploitation rate has dropped substantially below 16%. When considering reopening an area, ADF&G will consider effort and establish a new guideline harvest level.

The Amak District will be open for continuous exploration. No reported catches nor biomass estimates have been made for the Amak District. Guideline harvest levels have not been established for the Amak District, and the Western and Deer Island Sections of the Port Moller District (Table 1). Catches from these areas will be kept small until an estimate is made of the stock biomass by ADF&G. ADF&G's monitoring of exploratory commercial activity will be accomplished by requiring industry to report catches and by ADF&G aerial surveys.

Wastage of herring occurred in the Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts during the 1991 and 1992 season. In 1991, herring had been feeding on krill and this resulted in unmarketable "belly burned" fish. If "belly burned" fish become a problem during the

1993 season, fishing periods will be shortened so that the daily processing capacity of the processors present on-the-grounds will not be exceeded. In 1992, the bulk of the North Peninsula harvest occurred shortly after record harvests in the Togiak fishery, this severely limited processing and tender capacity. The limited processor capacity sometimes resulted in North Peninsula herring being held for days prior to be processed and resulted in wastage. Limited tender capacity also resulted in wastage of herring when fishermen caught herring but had no tenders available to deliver the catch to a processor. If tender and processor capacity is limited and wastage problems are likely to result, fishing periods will be delayed until tender and processor capacity is sufficient to transport and process the harvest. In 1992, several purse seine sets were made near the head of Port Heiden Bay, shallow waters and sand bars prevented tenders from reaching these fishing vessels; the herring were released but mortality on these herring was excessive. To prevent a recurrence of this wastage problem, Port Heiden Bay will be closed for the duration of herring season south of 56°50' N. latitude (Figure 8).

South Peninsula

By emergency order (number 4-F-M-SP-01-93) the Sand Point, Pavlof, and King Cove Districts commercial sac roe herring fisheries are from April 15 through July 15. Fishing periods are continuous from the opening date of each fishery. However, ADF&G's ability to monitor herring fisheries becomes limited by mid-June, this may be a consideration in shortening fishing periods and seasons.

The season will close for each stock by emergency order as their respective guideline harvest levels are achieved, or when fishery performance and stock performance indicate that deviations from the guideline harvest levels are warranted (where actual harvests occur at levels greater or lesser than expected). Stocks which are considered underexploited will remain open for adequate exploitation to occur or until the July 15 regulatory closure date. During the sac roe season, stocks which have been closed to harvesting may be reopened if it is determined by ADF&G that more fish in spawning condition have moved into the area, increasing the available spawning biomass to the point that the initial exploitation rate has dropped substantially below 20%. When considering reopening an area, ADF&G will consider effort and establish a new guideline harvest level.

The General Section (Shumagin Islands) of the Sand Point District, the Seal Cape-Wosnesenski Section of the Pavlof District, and the general Section of the King Cove District will be open for continuous exploration. No biomass estimates have been made for these sections, nor have guideline harvest levels been established. Catches from these sections will be kept small until an estimate is made of the stock biomass by ADF&G. ADF&G monitoring of exploratory commercial activity will be accomplished by requiring industry to report catches and by ADF&G aerial surveys.

Aleutian Islands

By emergency order (number 4-F-M-SP-01-93) the Unimak, Akutan, Unalaska, Umnak, and Adak Districts commercial sac roe herring fishery is from April 15 through June 15. Aleutian Islands herring sac roe fisheries will close on June 15, if sac roe stocks are discovered during the June 15 through July 15 time period, appropriate locations can be opened to herring sac roe fishing by emergency order. Fishing periods are continuous from the opening date of each fishery. However, ADF&G's ability to monitor herring fisheries becomes limited by mid-June, this may be a consideration in shortening fishing periods.

Information on Aleutian herring spawning stocks is limited to Margarets Bay in Unalaska Harbor where a few herring in ripe condition were sampled by ADF&G in 1983 and 1984. No biomass estimates have been made of any Aleutian stocks, nor have guideline harvest levels been established. If spawning stocks of herring are harvested the season will close for each stock by emergency order when fishery performance and stock performance indicate closures are warranted (where actual harvests occur at levels greater or lesser than expected). Stocks which are considered under-exploited will remain open for adequate exploitation to occur or until the June 15 emergency order closure date. During the sac roe season, stocks which have been closed to harvesting may be reopened if it is determined by ADF&G that more fish in spawning condition have moved into the area, increasing the available spawning biomass to the point that the initial exploitation rate has dropped substantially below 20%. When considering reopening an area, ADF&G will consider effort and establish a new guideline harvest level.

All Aleutian Islands Districts will be open for continuous exploration. Catches from these districts will be kept small until an estimate is made of the stock biomass by ADF&G. ADF&G's monitoring of exploratory commercial activity will be accomplished by requiring industry to report catches and by ADF&G aerial surveys.

LITERATURE CITED

- ADF&G (Alaska Department of Fish and Game). 1992. 1992 Commercial herring fishing regulations, 1992 edition. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Juneau.
- McCullough, J.N., and M.E. Stopha. 1993. Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas sac roe herring sac roe report and the Aleutian Islands Management Area herring food and bait report, 1993. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Regional Information Report 4K93-3, Kodiak.
- Funk, F.C. 1991. Overview of Bering Sea herring migration, stock status, and commercial fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Regional Information Report 5J91-13, Juneau.

Table 1. Alaska Peninsula Management Area herring sac roe catch, in short tons, by area and period, 1979-91.

	Sout	th Peninsula	North	Peninsula	Total
Year	Catch	Period	Catch	Period	Catch
1979	10.1	July 4-July 4	0.0		10.1
1980	453.0	May 18-July 14	0.0		453.0
1981	787.0	May 9-June 23	0.0		787.0
1982	176.2	May 31-June 14	513.5	May 31-June 12	689.7
1983	0.0	,	637.5	May 9-May 29	637.5
1984	210.4	May 13-June 1	431.2	May 24-June 8	641.6
1985	345.0	June 1-June 11	716.0	May 24-June 4	1,061.0
1986	281.5	June 7-June 14	888.9	May 18-May 30	1,170.4
1987	319.0	June 8-June 19	512.4	May 9-June 5	831.4
1988	376.8	May 31-June 20	293.7	May 17-June 15	670.5
1989	310.0	May 13-June 19	744.7	May 28-June 23	1,054.7
1990	312.2	May 14-June 14	272.8	June 4-June 19	585.0
1991	157.4	May 16-June 11	1,313.0	May 17-July 4	1,470.5
1992	180.4	June 4-June 7	3,969.0	May 23-June 17	4,149.4
1988-92	Average				
1000 02	267.4		1,318.6	**************************************	1,586.0

Table 2. Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Management Areas herring sac roeharvest guideline levels, in short tons, by management area, 1993.

Management Area	Guideline Harvest Level Sac Roe Harvest
South Peninsula	
Sand Point District Stepovak Bay Section Swedania Point-Balboa Bay Section Point Aliaksin-Beaver Bay Section General Section	150 15 40 b
Pavlof District Canoe Bay Section Pavlof Bay Section Seal Cape-Wosnesenski Section General Section (Volcano Bay)	100 25 b 20
King Cove District Belkofski Section Deer Passage Section Cold Bay Section General Section	25 15 25 b
South Peninsula Total	415
North Peninsula	
Amak District	b
Port Moller District ^C Western Section Deer Island Section ^d	р
Herendeen Bay Section Inner Moller Bay Section Outer Moller Bay Bear River Section ^e	150 900 900 50
Port Heiden District ^f	1,500
North Peninsula Total	3,500

Management Area	Guideline Harvest Level Sac Roe Harvest
Aleutian Islands	
Unimak District	b b
Akutan District Unalaska District	b b
Umnak District Adak District	b
Guideline Harvest Total ⁹	3,915

The Aleutian Islands Management Area is open for exploration; no deliveries have ever been made from the Aleutian Islands. Portions of a section, district, or area may be closed if it is suspected that additional harvests in a given location will exceed 20% of the spawning biomass.

- Herring abundance in the Port Moller District is difficult to document. The 1993 herring abundance may justify a larger catch than 2,000 tons, however to increase the guideline harvest level a larger than expected spawning biomass must be documented by ADF&G.
- Herring harvested in the Deer Island Section of Herendeen Bay will be counted against the Herendeen Bay gittle harvest level.
- Herring harvested along the Bering Sea coast will be counted against the Port Moller and Herendeen Bays guidate harvest level if it is suspected that these herring were traveling into Port Moller or Herendeen Bays.
- In 1992, commercial quantities of herring were harvested for the first time in the Port Heiden District. The 1993 herring abundance may justify a larger catch than 1,500 tons, however to increase the guideline harvest level at than expected spawning biomass must be documented by ADF&G. The commercial herring fishery will be marged conservatively until adequate data is obtained to warrant a liberal management approach. Herring harvested along the Bering Sea coast will be counted against the Port Heiden guideline harvest level if it is suspected that these herring were traveling in to Port Heiden Bay.

All areas without guideline harvest levels are open for exploration. Harvests in these areas will be kept small until ADF&G is able to document the spawning biomass. For the General Section of the Sand Point District (Shumagin Islands), Seal Cape- Wosnesenski Section, the General Section of the King Cove District, Amak District, Western Section of the Port Moller District, and the Aleutian Islands, no more than 50 tons of herring will be allowed to be harvested from the waters near any single island or bay in exploratory areas unless ADF&G documents a herring biomass that would allow a larger harvest.

⁹ Total does not include harvests that may occur in areas open for exploration.

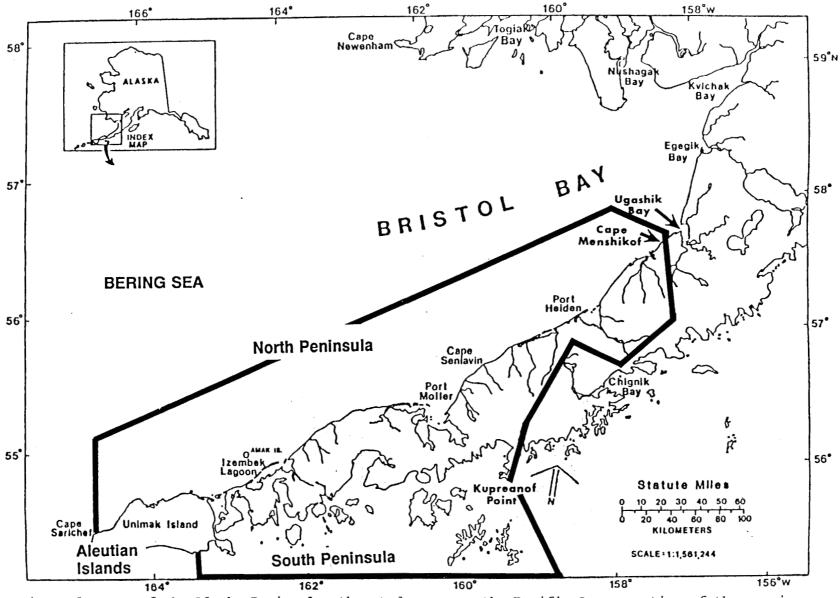


Figure 1. Map of the Alaska Peninsula, the study area on the Pacific Ocean portion of the map is from Kupreanof Point to Unimak Island and on the Bering Sea from Unimak Island to Cape Menshikof.

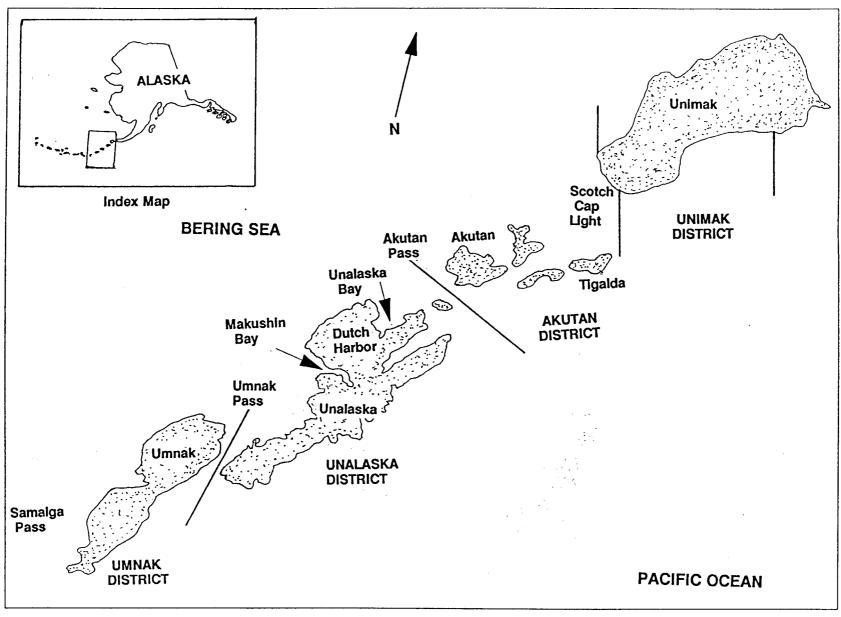


Figure 2. Map of the Eastern Aleutian Islands, the study area includes the Unimak, Akutan, and Unalaska Districts and that portion of the Umnak District east of Samalga Pass.

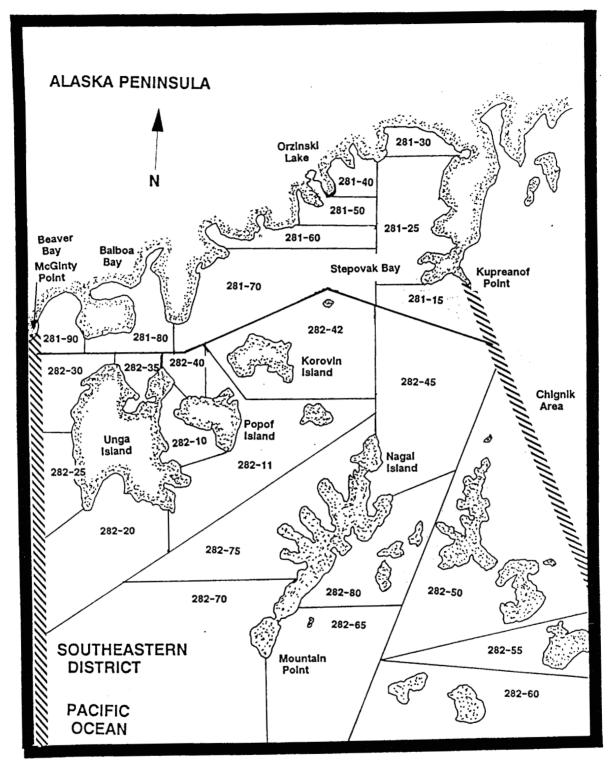


Figure 3. Map of the Alaska Peninsula Area from Kupreanof Point to McGinty Point, Southeastern District, with the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

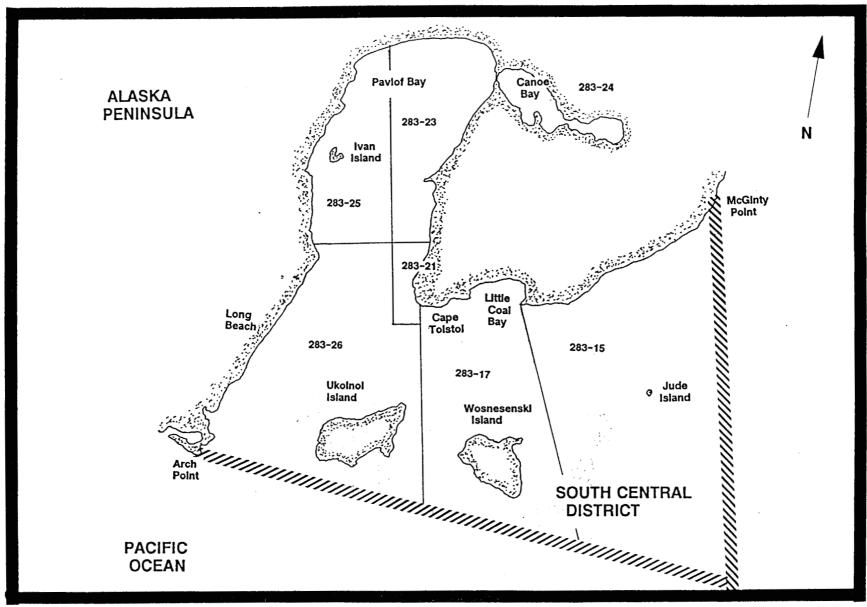


Figure 4. Map of the Alaska Peninsula Area from McGinty Point to Arch Point, South Central District, with the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

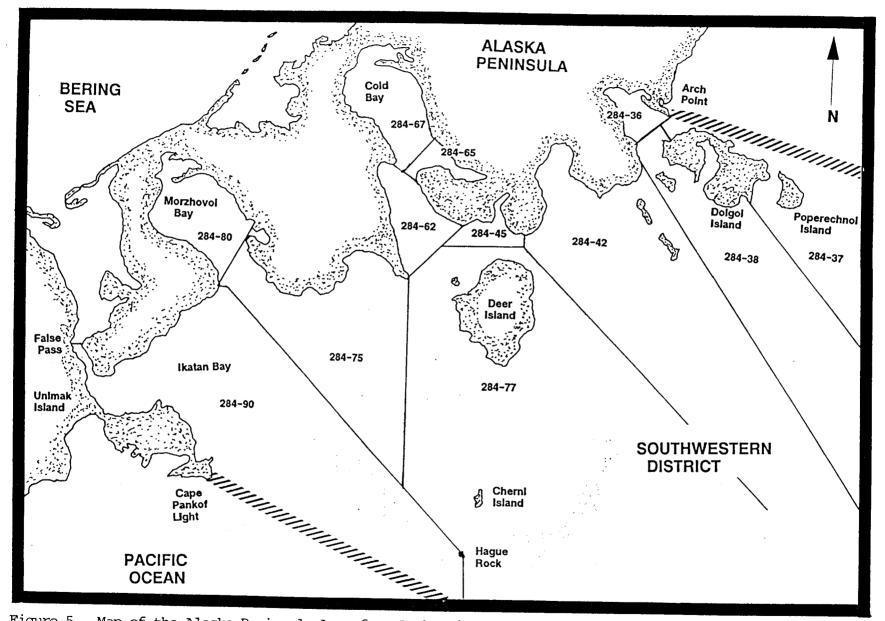


Figure 5. Map of the Alaska Peninsula Area from Arch Point to Cape Pankof Light, Southwestern District, with the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

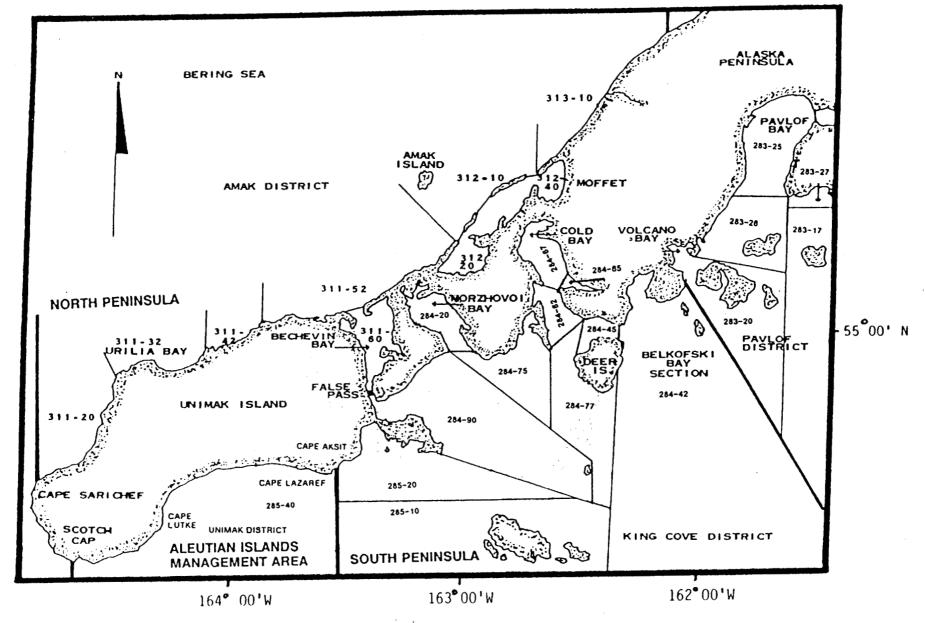


Figure 6. Map of the Alaska Peninsula Area from Pavlof Bay to Scotch Cap with the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

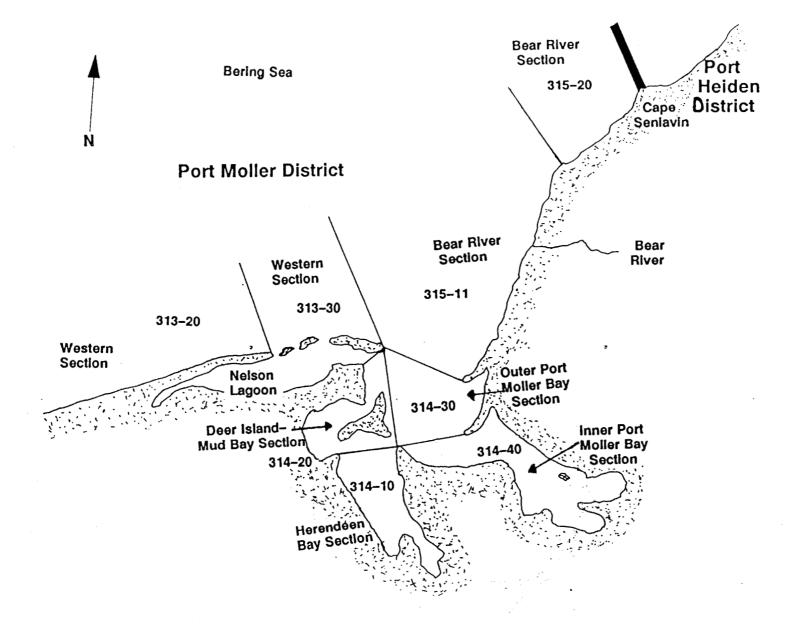
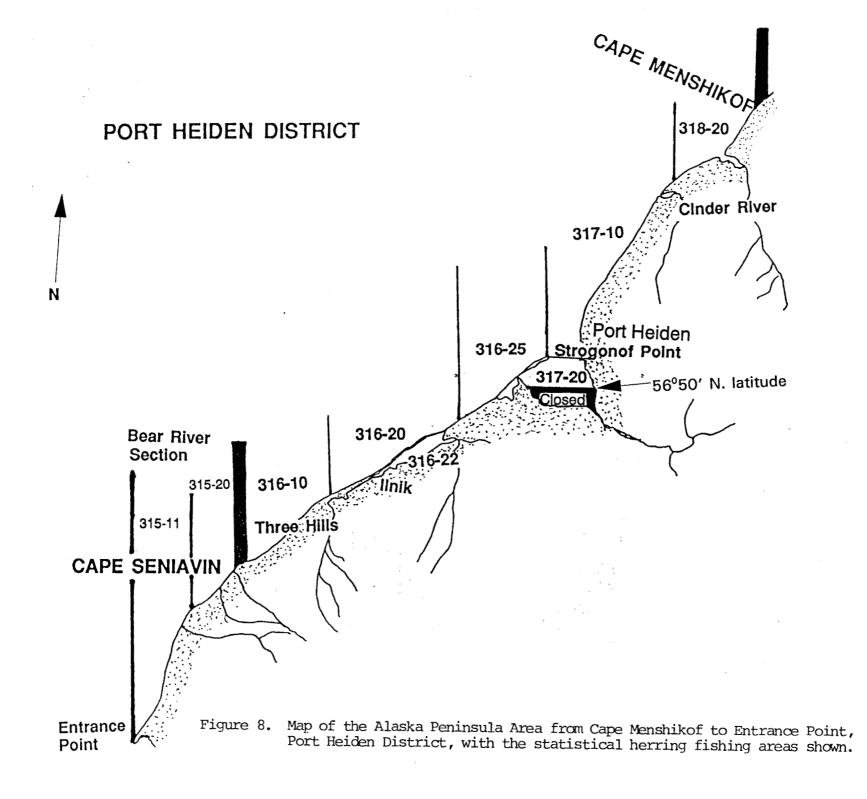


Figure 7. Map of the Alaska Peninsula Area from Cape Seniavin to Nelson Lagoon, Port Moller District, with the statistical herring fishing areas shown.



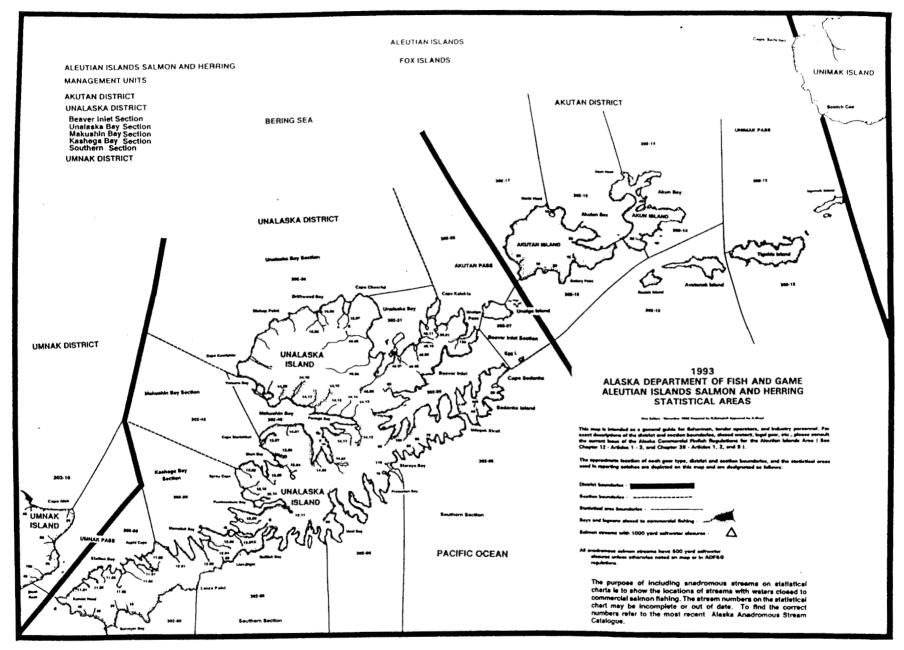


Figure 9. Map of Aleutian Islands Area from Tigalda Island to Umnak Island and the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: BUYER AND TENDER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

5 AAC 27.662 BUYER AND TENDER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the requirements of 5 AAC 39.130(f) each tender operator and each buyer or his agents shall report in person to and register with a local representative of the department upon arrival in the statistical area (North Peninsula: Port Moller or Port Heiden; South Peninsula and Aleutian Islands: Canoe Bay, Sand Point, Dutch Harbor, Port Moller) before commencing operations and before changing location of the operation. Each buyer shall:

- (1) identify all vessels to be employed in transporting or processing herring and shall register such vessels with a local representative of the department located in the statistical area before transporting or processing of herring;
- (2) make daily reports of all herring purchased from fishermen, and other processing records as specified by local representative of the department; and
- (3) submit fish tickets before departure from the area and no later than 10 days after termination of buying operations in the area, or as otherwise specified by a local representative of the department.

APPENDIX B: MANAGEMENT CHANGES FOR 1993

District changes: Kupreanof Point definition:

5 AAC 27.605 DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICTS AND SECTIONS. (a) Sand Point District: all waters on the south (Pacific) side of the Alaska Peninsula west of a line extending from 135° from Kupreanof Point (55°33'58" N. lat., 159°35'48" W. long.), and east of 160°59' W. long. (longitude of McGinty Point).

(1) Stepovak Bay section: all waters of the Sand Point district located west of a line extending from 135° from Kupreanof Point (55°33'58" N. lat., 159°35'48" W. long.), north of a line from approximately two nautical miles south of 135° from Kupreanof Point, west to 55°32'12" N. lat., 160°02'36" W. long., (approximately one nautical mile north of Karpa Island), and west to 55°26' N. lat., 160°31'30" W. long., (approximately two nautical miles south of the longitude of Swedania Point 160°31'30" W. long.).

Port Moller and Port Heiden fishing period notice: minimum notice of six hours prior to any fishing period unless it is an extension of a fishing period.

Closures: Port Heiden Bay south of 56°50' N. lat.

Registration: Tenders in the Port Moller and Port Heiden Districts must registered on-the-grounds at Port Moller and/or Port Heiden.

Port Moller and Port Heiden: No fishing unless tender and processor capacity is sufficient for the estimated harvest.

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If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information please write to ADF&G, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 300 Webb, Arlington, VA 22203 or O.E.O., U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC 20240.

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